

if an instructional employee who normally works five days each week needs to take two days of FMLA leave per week over a period of several weeks, the special rules would apply. Employees taking leave which constitutes 20 percent or less of the working days during the leave period would not be subject to transfer to an alternative position. *Periods of a particular duration* means a block, or blocks, of time beginning no earlier than the first day for which leave is needed and ending no later than the last day on which leave is needed, and may include one uninterrupted period of leave.

(b) If an instructional employee does not give required notice of foreseeable FMLA leave (*see* § 825.302) to be taken intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule, the employer may require the employee to take leave of a particular duration, or to transfer temporarily to an alternative position. Alternatively, the employer may require the employee to delay the taking of leave until the notice provision is met.

§ 825.602 Special rules for school employees, limitations on leave near the end of an academic term.

(a) There are also different rules for instructional employees who begin leave more than five weeks before the end of a term, less than five weeks before the end of a term, and less than three weeks before the end of a term. Regular rules apply except in circumstances when:

(1) An instructional employee begins leave more than five weeks before the end of a term. The employer may require the employee to continue taking leave until the end of the term if—

(i) The leave will last at least three weeks, and

(ii) The employee would return to work during the three-week period before the end of the term.

(2) The employee begins leave during the five-week period before the end of a term because of the birth of a son or daughter; the placement of a son or daughter for adoption or foster care; to care for a spouse, son, daughter, or parent with a serious health condition; or to care for a covered servicemember. The employer may require the em-

ployee to continue taking leave until the end of the term if—

(i) The leave will last more than two weeks, and

(ii) The employee would return to work during the two-week period before the end of the term.

(3) The employee begins leave during the three-week period before the end of a term because of the birth of a son or daughter; the placement of a son or daughter for adoption or foster care; to care for a spouse, son, daughter, or parent with a serious health condition; or to care for a covered servicemember. The employer may require the employee to continue taking leave until the end of the term if the leave will last more than five working days.

(b) For purposes of these provisions, *academic term* means the school semester, which typically ends near the end of the calendar year and the end of spring each school year. In no case may a school have more than two academic terms or semesters each year for purposes of FMLA. An example of leave falling within these provisions would be where an employee plans two weeks of leave to care for a family member which will begin three weeks before the end of the term. In that situation, the employer could require the employee to stay out on leave until the end of the term.

§ 825.603 Special rules for school employees, duration of FMLA leave.

(a) If an employee chooses to take leave for periods of a particular duration in the case of intermittent or reduced schedule leave, the entire period of leave taken will count as FMLA leave.

(b) In the case of an employee who is required to take leave until the end of an academic term, only the period of leave until the employee is ready and able to return to work shall be charged against the employee's FMLA leave entitlement. The employer has the option not to require the employee to stay on leave until the end of the school term. Therefore, any additional leave required by the employer to the end of the school term is not counted as FMLA leave; however, the employer

§ 825.604

shall be required to maintain the employee's group health insurance and restore the employee to the same or equivalent job including other benefits at the conclusion of the leave.

§ 825.604 Special rules for school employees, restoration to an equivalent position.

The determination of how an employee is to be restored to an equivalent position upon return from FMLA leave will be made on the basis of "established school board policies and practices, private school policies and practices, and collective bargaining agreements." The "established policies" and collective bargaining agreements used as a basis for restoration must be in writing, must be made known to the employee prior to the taking of FMLA leave, and must clearly explain the employee's restoration rights upon return from leave. Any established policy which is used as the basis for restoration of an employee to an equivalent position must provide substantially the same protections as provided in the Act for reinstated employees. See § 825.215. In other words, the policy or collective bargaining agreement must provide for restoration to an equivalent position with equivalent employment benefits, pay, and other terms and conditions of employment. For example, an employee may not be restored to a position requiring additional licensure or certification.

Subpart G—Effect of Other Laws, Employer Practices, and Collective Bargaining Agreements on Employee Rights Under FMLA

§ 825.700 Interaction with employer's policies.

(a) An employer must observe any employment benefit program or plan that provides greater family or medical leave rights to employees than the rights established by the FMLA. Conversely, the rights established by the Act may not be diminished by any employment benefit program or plan. For example, a provision of a CBA which provides for reinstatement to a position that is not equivalent because of seniority (*e.g.*, provides lesser pay) is

29 CFR Ch. V (7–1–14 Edition)

superseded by FMLA. If an employer provides greater unpaid family leave rights than are afforded by FMLA, the employer is not required to extend additional rights afforded by FMLA, such as maintenance of health benefits (other than through COBRA), to the additional leave period not covered by FMLA.

(b) Nothing in this Act prevents an employer from amending existing leave and employee benefit programs, provided they comply with FMLA. However, nothing in the Act is intended to discourage employers from adopting or retaining more generous leave policies.

§ 825.701 Interaction with State laws.

(a) Nothing in FMLA supersedes any provision of State or local law that provides greater family or medical leave rights than those provided by FMLA. The Department of Labor will not, however, enforce State family or medical leave laws, and States may not enforce the FMLA. Employees are not required to designate whether the leave they are taking is FMLA leave or leave under State law, and an employer must comply with the appropriate (applicable) provisions of both. An employer covered by one law and not the other has to comply only with the law under which it is covered. Similarly, an employee eligible under only one law must receive benefits in accordance with that law. If leave qualifies for FMLA leave and leave under State law, the leave used counts against the employee's entitlement under both laws. Examples of the interaction between FMLA and State laws include:

(1) If State law provides 16 weeks of leave entitlement over two years, an employee needing leave due to his or her own serious health condition would be entitled to take 16 weeks one year under State law and 12 weeks the next year under FMLA. Health benefits maintenance under FMLA would be applicable only to the first 12 weeks of leave entitlement each year. If the employee took 12 weeks the first year, the employee would be entitled to a maximum of 12 weeks the second year under FMLA (not 16 weeks). An employee would not be entitled to 28 weeks in one year.